

### *□ Funding Allows for Increased Coordination Among Local and Federal Agencies Along Border □*

Washington, DC-Congressman Harry Teague announced today that the Department of Homeland Security will be allocating \$3,981,414 to bolster local law enforcement agencies along the US-Mexico border. The Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) program supports the efforts of local law enforcement to keep America's borders secure by providing funding to enhance cooperation and coordination among local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

"Often times the men and women of our local Sheriff's departments are the first to respond when law enforcement is needed in border communities," said Congressman Harry Teague. "This nearly \$4 million in funding will allow our local law enforcement agencies to continue coordinating with the U.S. Border Patrol as they work to secure our borders and keep our citizens safe," said Congressman Harry Teague.

Among other things, the funding can be used for overtime pay to increase available law enforcement agents patrolling the border. The funding can also be used to purchase equipment needed to support border patrol activities such as ATV's, night vision, and communications devices.

Luna County Sheriff's Department Lieutenant John Mooradian attends monthly meetings with the border patrol to coordinate efforts. "Sometimes the Sheriff's department is the only backup the Border Patrol has and sometimes they are the only backup we have, so this additional funding will help support our efforts to cooperate with the Border Patrol to get as many boots on the ground as possible and better secure our borders," said Lieutenant Mooradian.

The Department of Homeland Security will be allocating a total of \$60,000,000 nationwide for the OPSG program. Local agencies had to apply by January of 2009 to be eligible to receive the funding. The awards were made on a competitive basis to designated localities within U.S. border states.

County

2008

2009

Grant

\$890,000

\$1,167,377

Luna

\$880,000

\$1,133,174

Dona Ana

\$900,000

\$1,129,374

Hidalgo

\$550,000

\$551,488

**Total**

\$3,230,000

\$3,981,413